

## Case Study: Simplyhealth – Being the Difference 2008



We are proud to have worked with Simplyhealth to design, develop and deliver the 'Being the Difference' awards 2008.

Simplyhealth has been delivering community and charity initiatives in the UK for many years. They have also consistently supported their staff in the delivery of local fundraising events.

However, in addition to these on-going initiatives, Simplyhealth wanted to find a way of recognising and rewarding the amazing voluntary and extra work that

employees achieve both outside and inside of work. Simplyhealth chose to work with Across the Divide to create the Being the Difference Awards.

### How the Awards worked

By their very nature, the sort of people who give their time for the benefit of others...don't often shout that loud about it. So Simplyhealth created a process where colleagues could nominate workmates for the voluntary work they deliver. An independent panel of judges from across the business reviewed all nominations and identified the 30 finalists. From this final group, the judges selected the 10 individuals who would represent Simplyhealth in the Being the Difference project.

### Creating the right reward

Simplyhealth needed a way of rewarding the 10 employees who were recognised as Being the Difference. It was important that the prize was a genuine reward, but not a 'corporate jolly'. It was also key that the prize involved delivering a worthwhile project, but that it was not a 'boot camp' Simplyhealth asked Across the Divide to create a 'once in a lifetime' prize that was both reward and an genuine extension of the company's CSR commitment.

### What we did next...

We worked with the client to explore the types of projects that would engage the Simplyhealth team and complement their existing UK work. From our overseas operations, we quickly established that Brazil would effectively provide all the elements for blending together the reward and project work. We were able to source and identify three possible projects for the group to deliver and after much consultation; Simplyhealth chose the construction of a Family Health Centre in the Kalunga area of mid west Brazil.



### About the project



During the dreadful times of slavery, a number of slaves were ordered into the inhospitable scrubland areas of mid west Brazil to search for gold and sugar cane. When the opportunity arose, a number of these slaves escaped to hide from their masters and from Brazilian authorities for many years. The Kalunga Community are the descendents of these escaped slaves. They live in a protected area of land (approximately the size of Luxemburg) 5 hours north of Brasilia. They are a farming community and are predominantly self sufficient. The income levels are very low and provision of healthcare and

education is restricted. We worked directly with the community and the local authorities to identify and agree the needs. After full feasibility and impact research, it was clear that basic health care provision was required, as some community members had to walk a significant number of days to the nearest town for health care.

For Simplyhealth, the choice of project made perfect sense. It was a clear extension of the core work of making health care available to those that need it. We worked with our partner organisation to agree the construction of a health centre that would provide basic medical, dental and preventative healthcare. Across the Divide project



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managed the construction of the centre using local labour and the Being the Difference Award winners would spend one week completing the work on the building and delivering the handover to the community.

### How the event went

The first couple of days in Brasilia, gave the group a chance to experience Brazilian culture. They also met with healthcare professionals who explained the Brazilian healthcare system and gave the context for the Kalunga Project. The team then travelled to Engenho and met with the Kalunga Community. They were welcomed into



the community and immediately immersed in the project work. On arrival, the building was 90% complete and the team were challenged with the completion of the building in preparation for the handover ceremony.



Working alongside the community, they painted and decorated both inside and outside. They glazed the windows, created a ramp for disabled access, hung the doors and finalised the windows. This work was combined with memorable dinners at community member's houses, local music nights around the camp fire, visiting the local waterfalls and a celebratory party and dancing on the final night.



The building was handed over the Kalunga Community with pride and a lot of emotion. The Health Centre will provide basic healthcare provision to approximately 4000 community members.

### Sustaining the building

It is fundamental to Across the Divide that all projects undertaken are well resourced and sustainable for the long term. We worked very closely with both the Health Departments of both local and state government to agree the long term funding for both medical equipment and medical professionals. We also created a commitment for local Kalunga community members to be employed within the Health Centre. We continue to also work closely with Simplyhealth to support their ongoing commitment to the Kalunga Community.



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